UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/48/L.33
29 November 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-eighth session
Agenda item 56

RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields

Benin: draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 45/264 of 11 May 1991 and 46/235 of 13 April 1992,

Recalling its resolutions 57 (I) of 11 December 1946, 304 (IV) of 16 November 1949, 417 (V) of 1 December 1950, 1240 (XIII) of 14 October 1958, 1714 (XVI) of 19 December 1961, 2029 (XX) of 22 November 1965, 2211 (XXI) of 17 December 1966, 2688 (XXV) of 11 December 1970, 2813 (XXVI) and 2815 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971, 3019 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, 3404 (XXX) of 28 November 1975, 31/170 of 21 December 1976, 34/104 of 14 December 1979 and 36/244 of 28 April 1982, and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1084 (XXXIX) of 30 July 1965, 1763 (LIV) of 18 May 1973 and 1986/7 of 21 May 1986, and other relevant resolutions,

1. Adopts the texts contained in the annexes to the present resolution;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to implement the further measures for restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields starting in 1994;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1994, on the implementation of the present resolution;

4. Calls upon the Secretary-General, in view of the decision to enlarge the role of the Council, to strengthen the secretariat of the Council in order to enable it to provide the necessary support to the Council;

5. Invites the specialized agencies, organizations and other bodies of the United Nations system to implement the measures for restructuring within their respective areas of competence, as appropriate;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-ninth session the item entitled "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields".

ANNEX I

Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations has a unique and paramount role in the promotion of international cooperation for development. In the present historical context, the end of the cold war, the increasing interdependence of nations, the increasing globalization of the world economy, and the growing linkages between economic, social and related issues, the need for an enhanced role for the United Nations in international cooperation for development has multiplied manifold. This, on one hand, entails strengthening the role of the United Nations in promoting international economic cooperation for development as envisaged in the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and, on the other, restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

2. The United Nations has established goals, targets and programmes for action in the economic, social and related fields. Important milestones of global consensus to promote international economic cooperation include the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, 1/ adopted at the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, held from 23 April to 1 May 1990, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, 2/ the final documents adopted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session, held at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 8 to 25 February 1992, in particular the Declaration and the document entitled "A New Partnership for Development: the Cartagena Commitment", 3/ the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, 4/ and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, 5/ adopted at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris from 3 to 14 September 1990. The various

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1/ Resolution S-18/3, annex, of 1 May 1990.

2/ Resolution 45/199, annex, of 21 December 1990.

3/ TD/364, part one, sect. A.

4/ Resolution 46/151, annex, sect. II, of 18 December 1991.

5/ See A/CONF.147/18.

conventions and consensus agreements, especially Agenda 21, 6/ which were adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development at the level of heads of State and Government, mark the beginning of a new global partnership for sustainable development. All these landmarks together provide the overall framework of international cooperation for development.

3. Each country is responsible for its own economic policies for development, in accordance with its specific situation and conditions. Reactivation of economic growth and development in all countries requires concerted efforts by the international community. In this context, particular attention should be given to the growth and development needs of developing countries. Concerns of countries with economies in transition should also be addressed. The policies and actions of the major industrialized countries profoundly influence world economic growth and the international economic environment. They should continue to make efforts to promote sustained and sustainable growth and to narrow imbalances in a manner that should benefit other countries, particularly the developing countries.

4. The coordination of macroeconomic policies should take full account of the interests and concerns of all countries. In this context, efforts should be made to enhance the effectiveness of multilateral surveillance aimed at correcting external and fiscal imbalances, promoting non-inflationary sustained and sustainable growth, lowering real rates of interest and making exchange rates more stable and markets more accessible.

5. The United Nations is a unique forum where, based on the principle of sovereign equality of all States and the universality of its membership, the community of nations can address all issues in an integrated manner. The organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system have a vital role to play in furthering the analytical work of relevance to the implementation of global consensus on international economic cooperation, in promoting and securing the international cooperation needed and in providing technical assistance. The international development system should be given greater coherence by closer inter-agency cooperation and coordination and by organizational measures, including guidelines on reporting, that strengthen the contribution of the system to development. There is also an urgent need to discuss ways of enabling the specialized agencies, which make an indispensable contribution to development, to perform better their mandated functions on the basis of enhanced coordination guidance from the Council. Efforts should be made to promote greater coordination and cooperation among the various components of the United Nations system.

6. The United Nations has also a substantial programme of operational activities through which it provides technical and other assistance for development. There is a continuing need to improve the quality and impact of these activities of the United Nations.

6/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1991 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8), vol. I, resolution I, annex II.

II. PRINCIPLES FOR RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION

7. The basic principles and guidelines for restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields were established by the General Assembly in resolution 45/264 of 13 May 1991 and reaffirmed in resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992. This effort should also take into account the thrust and principles of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, as contained in the annex to Assembly resolution S-18/3, and Assembly resolution 45/199 of 21 December 1990, and other relevant resolutions. The current reform and all future efforts at reform should respect and build upon those resolutions and should be in conformity with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, which is based upon the sovereign equality of all its Members.

III. INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

A. Complementarity between the work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies

8. The objective is to enhance the complementarity between the work of the Economic and Social Council and the work of the General Assembly, in accordance with Article 60 of the Charter, in order to avoid the present overlapping and unnecessary duplication of work, debates and items between these two organs and their subsidiary bodies.

9. Both principal organs should carry out their respective responsibilities, as entrusted to them in the Charter, in the formulation of policies and the provision of guidance to and coordination of United Nations activities in the economic, social and related fields.

10. In order to ensure that the operational activities of the United Nations system effectively assist the recipient countries in their development efforts, improvements are needed at both the policy-making and the operational levels.

1. The role of the General Assembly

11. The General Assembly is the highest intergovernmental mechanism for the formulation and appraisal of policy on matters relating to the economic, social and related fields, in accordance with Chapter IX of the Charter. It is the main forum where Governments pursue the development dialogue, which includes all these issues, in its political context. The purpose of the dialogue is to take an integrated view of matters relating to the economic, social and related fields in order to build and deepen the political understanding required for enhanced international development cooperation, to generate impulses for action and to launch initiatives.

2. The role of the Economic and Social Council

12. The functions and powers of the Economic and Social Council are provided for in Chapters IX and X of the Charter and as elaborated in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. With the adoption and implementation of General Assembly resolutions 45/264 and 46/235, the Council has been significantly revitalized. The following additional measures will further strengthen the Council:

(a) High-level segment

13. As established by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/264, the high-level segment of the Council's substantive session shall continue to consider one or more major economic and/or social policy themes, with the participation of Ministers. It should also carry out a one-day policy dialogue and discussion with the heads of financial and trade institutions. In this connection, these institutions are invited to furnish relevant special reports and studies on the selected themes, within their respective mandates and areas of expertise, as well as on important developments in the world economy and in international economic cooperation, in accordance with the agreements signed between them and the United Nations.

(b) Coordination segment

14. The coordination segment shall continue to deal with one or more themes selected at the organizational session of the Council, as established in Assembly resolution 45/264, and will take up coordination matters arising from subsidiary bodies, principal organs and specialized agencies in the economic, social and related fields. Following the coordination segment there should be agreed conclusions containing specific recommendations to the various parts of the United Nations system for their implementation, in accordance with resolution 45/264. In accordance with the present resolution and resolution 45/264, the Secretary-General should arrange to inform the Council at its following substantive session of steps taken by the United Nations system to give effect to these recommendations.

(c) Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation segment

15. In order to improve the quality and impact of the operational activities of the United Nations and to promote an integrated approach in this field, this segment shall provide coordination and guidance so as to ensure that the policies formulated by the Assembly, particularly during the triennial policy review of operational activities, are appropriately implemented on a system-wide basis. The work of the operational activities segment would include a high-level meeting, open to all Member States in accordance with Article 69 of the Charter, including ministerial participation, to provide an opportunity for policy makers to engage in broad consultations on international development cooperation. Specific arrangements will be decided upon by the Council at its organizational session. The outcome of this segment shall be reflected, inter alia, in the adoption of decisions and resolutions.

16. This segment will have the following functions:

(a) To provide the United Nations system with cross-sectoral coordination and overall guidance on a system-wide basis, including objectives, priorities and strategies, in the implementation of the policies formulated by the General Assembly in the field of operational activities;

(b) To monitor the division of labour between and cooperation within the bodies of the United Nations system, in particular the development funds and programmes, to include the conduct of field-level coordination, and make appropriate recommendations to the Assembly, as well as to provide guidance, where appropriate, to the system;

(c) To review and evaluate the reports on the work of the development funds and programmes, including the assessment of their overall impact, with a view to enhancing the operational activities of the United Nations on a system-wide basis;

(d) To undertake preparatory work for the triennial policy review of operational activities by the Assembly;

(e) To review the operationally relevant recommendations of the subsidiary bodies of the Council and other relevant bodies in the light of policies established by the General Assembly, in order to incorporate them, as appropriate, into the operational activities of the United Nations;

(f) To provide orientation and recommendations to the relevant inter-agency coordination mechanisms and to support and enhance their role.

(d) General segment

17. The Economic and Social Committees of the Council shall be subsumed into the plenary as of 1994. Thus, the Council shall supervise the activities of its subsidiary bodies by considering and taking appropriate action on their reports and recommendations in the general segment.

18. The general segment shall be so organized as to recognize the distinction between economic and social issues as reflected in the draft agenda. In its consideration of the reports of its subsidiary bodies the Council shall concentrate on the conclusions and the adoption of recommendations and shall refrain from duplicating the substantive debate already held. However, further substantive discussions on specific issues shall be undertaken at the request of one or more Member States.

19. The various segments of the Council's substantive session, particularly the operational activities segment, shall be organized in such a way as to ensure that there is adequate time available for proper discussion of any item on the agenda, including those currently dealt with by the Economic and Social Committees, on the basis of the practice of the Council.

20. Ministerial attendance is encouraged throughout sessions of the Council, particularly in the high-level and operational activities segments of its substantive session.

3. Governing bodies of the United Nations development funds and programmes

21. The current governing bodies of the United Nations Development Programme/the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund shall be transformed into Executive Boards. These Boards shall be responsible for providing inter-governmental support to and supervision of the activities of each fund or programme in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the Assembly and the Council, in accordance with the respective responsibility as set out in the Charter, and for ensuring that they are responsive to the needs and priorities of recipient countries. The Boards will be subject to the authority of the Council. The need for a separate Executive Board for the United Nations Population Fund shall be further considered in the light of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in 1994.

22. The functions of each Executive Board shall be the following:

(a) To implement the policies formulated by the Assembly and the coordination and guidance received from the Council;

(b) To receive information from and give guidance to the head of each fund or programme on the work of each organization;

(c) To ensure that the activities and operational strategies of each fund or programme are consistent with the overall policy guidance set forth by the Assembly and the Council, in accordance with their respective responsibility as set out in the Charter;

(d) To monitor the performance of the fund or programme;

(e) To approve programmes, including country programmes, and projects with respect to the World Food Programme, as appropriate;

(f) To decide on administrative and financial plans and budgets;

(g) To recommend new initiatives to the Council and, through the Council, to the Assembly as necessary;

(h) To encourage and examine new programme initiatives;

(i) To submit annual reports to the Council at its substantive session, which could include recommendations, where appropriate, for improvement of field-level coordination.

23. The agendas and deliberations of the Executive Boards shall reflect the functions set forth in paragraph 22 above.

24. Membership of each Executive Board shall be with due regard to equitable geographical representation and other relevant factors, with a view to ensuring the most effective and broadest participation. The number of seats on each Board shall take into account the need for the effective conduct of the work of each Board.

25. The Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and subject to the provisions of paragraph 30 below, the World Food Programme, shall have 36 members each, as follows: 8 from African States, 7 from Asian States, 4 from Eastern European States, 5 from Latin America and Caribbean States and 12 from Western European and other States.

26. Each Executive Board shall meet in an annual session at such time as it determines.

27. The regular meetings of the Boards, which shall be held between the annual sessions, shall be held at the premises of the headquarters of the respective organization as of the date when such premises are rendered possible to accommodate such meetings. The Executive Boards of the funds and programmes are encouraged to make the necessary facilities available as soon as possible without prejudice to the resources of existing programmes and projects. Right of participation in the deliberations of the Board meetings, without the right to vote, shall also be reserved to a member State when its country programme is under consideration. The Executive Board may also invite member States of the respective funds and programmes and participants who manifest a special interest in the item or items under consideration to participate in the deliberations without the right to vote. Decision-making shall continue to be according to existing rules and the practice of striving for consensus should be encouraged.

28. In order to secure transparency of the system, improved modalities should be developed by the funds and programmes for regular informal briefings and improved information for all member States of the respective funds and programmes.

29. In order to ensure an effective and efficient interaction between the Assembly, the Council and the individual Executive Boards, each Board will submit an annual report to the Council at its substantive session on its programmes and activities. This report will include a section which follows a common structure on the basis of specific areas designated by the Council or the Assembly.

30. The same arrangements should apply to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme, and consultations between the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations should be undertaken as soon as possible for this purpose, in view of the fact that the World Food Programme is an autonomous joint organ of both. This process should lead to the adoption of parallel resolutions by the General Assembly and the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization.

B. Resources for operational activities

31. The fundamental characteristics of operational activities, especially those relating to their financing, as set forth in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, especially resolution 47/199, are reaffirmed.

32. As part of the overall reform process, there is a need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries, as stated in General Assembly resolution 47/199. Any new funding system should include mechanisms for all participating countries to demonstrate their responsibility and commitment to the programmes and funds. Such mechanisms should distinguish between the financing arrangements for contributions by developed countries and others in a position to do so, as against the capacity for voluntary contributions from developing countries.

33. To facilitate the development of such a system, the Secretary-General is requested to review and analyse possible changes and improvements in the present funding system, including, but not limited to, multi-year negotiated pledges, and to submit a report with his recommendations in April 1994. The report could include, if possible, an assessment of the likely impact of each option on the overall level of funding and on the level of contributions.

34. The process would include consultations to be held in New York in May 1994 for a period of no more than five days and negotiations on prospective new modalities for financing in a resumed session of the General Assembly in 1994.

C. Secretariat: the enhanced role and capability of the United Nations Secretariat

35. The Secretariat administrative reforms should take into account the intergovernmental agreements on the restructuring of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields with a view better to serve the activities of Member States in the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly, the Council and its subsidiary bodies.

36. The ongoing Secretariat reform process is noted. It has the potential to enhance the role of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, particularly in the area of research and analysis of global development trends. There is, however, a need to further examine ways and means to enhance the modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields. The Secretary-General is requested to make recommendations to the Economic and Social Council at its 1994 session to this effect, including recommendations on the advantages of establishing a system of integrated reports in the economic, social and related fields.

D. Review

37. Additional efforts shall be made to improve further the functioning of the United Nations in the field of operational activities. Appropriate arrangements shall be made for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the present resolution as well as of decisions on financing, including the possibility of considering those matters at a high-level meeting of the Council in 1995 and at the fiftieth session of the Assembly.

38. That review will include consideration of the effectiveness of the measures taken to improve the working methods of the Executive Boards, the possible need for a further modification in the size of the Boards and options for further improving the effectiveness and representation on these Boards, taking into account the need to combine universality with efficiency and to ensure transparency in decision-making.

ANNEX II

Division of labour between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

A. Guidelines

1. The following guidelines shall be applicable to the division of labour between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as of 1994:

(a) The inclusion or deletion of issues and items from the agendas of the Assembly and the Council, as well as the periodicity of their consideration, shall continue to be in accordance with the existing rules of procedure of the Assembly and the Council;

(b) Unnecessary duplication of debates and consideration of items and reports in the Assembly and the Council shall be avoided, according to the division of labour between both principal organs;

(c) Work overload in the Second and Third Committees of the Assembly and in the Council shall be avoided through agreed periodicity, such as biennialization and triennialization;

(d) Clustering of consideration of major economic, social and related issues should not preclude the discussion of any specific issue that a delegation may wish to bring up in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure;

(e) Documentation requirements for each session of the Assembly and the Council should be streamlined, and all documents should be made available according to the six-week rule;

(f) Consideration in the Assembly or the Council of reports of their subsidiary bodies should not repeat the substantive debate already held in the subsidiary body, but should concentrate on the adoption of recommendations. Substantive discussion of the report of a subsidiary body should only be undertaken upon the request of a Member State.

B. Reports

2. The preparation of all reports shall take into consideration the division of labour outlined in paragraph 1 above. To that end, reports from subsidiary organs, the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system must contain sections referring to one or all of the following, as appropriate:

(i) monitoring of the implementation of all previous decisions; (ii) policy recommendations; and (iii) coordination recommendations. The pertinent sections of each report should be discussed in the Assembly or the Council according to the responsibilities of each according to the Charter of the United Nations.

3. The total number of reports requested for each year should be reduced. When a biennial programme of work is adopted, the Secretariat should indicate whether it is in a position to provide the documentation in accordance with the six-week rule. If that is not the case, arrangements must be made to ensure that the Secretariat can comply with the six-week rule in regard to all documentation for the economic, social and related fields.

C. Methodology of work of the Second Committee

4. The draft programme of work of the Second Committee should be considered in informal consultations, with the assistance of the bureau of the Council, during the previous session of the Assembly before August. Once that programme of work has been approved by the Committee at its second meeting, the programme of debates should be changed only in extreme circumstances.

5. The same criteria should apply to the Council, whose programme of work should be considered in consultation with the Chairman of the Second Committee.

6. The debates in the Second Committee should be centred around the items listed in section E below.

D. Agenda for the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

7. The following items are to be considered by the Council at its annual substantive session:

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

High-level segment

2. Theme or themes to be decided upon at the organizational session of the Council.

Coordination segment

3. Coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system related to the following themes:

Theme or themes to be decided upon at the organizational session of the Council.

Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation segment

4. Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation.

General segment

5. Social, humanitarian and human rights questions: reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions.

6. Economic and environmental questions: reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions.

7. Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields.

8. Permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.

9. Programme and related questions in the economic, social and related fields.

E. Agenda for the Second Committee

8. The following items are to be considered by the Second Committee:

1. Report of the Economic and Social Council. 7/

2. Macroeconomic policy questions: 7/

(a) Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of the Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries; 8/

(b) Implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade; 8/

(c) External debt crisis and development; 7/

(d) International conference on the financing of development;

(e) Net transfer of resources between developing and developed countries. 8/

7/ Annual consideration.

8/ Biennial consideration in even-numbered years.

3. Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: 7/

(a) Trade and development; 7/

(b) Food and agricultural development; 8/

(c) Development of the energy resources of developing countries; 8/

(d) International Conference on Population and Development;

(e) Human settlements; 9/

(f) Science and technology for development; 9/

(g) Business and development; 9/

(h) International cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries; 7/

(i) Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries in the 1990s; 9/

(j) Industrial development cooperation; 8/

(k) Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy; 10/

(l) Women in development; 9/

(m) Cultural development;

(o) Human resources development. 9/

4. Environment and sustainable development: 7/

(a) Implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

(b) Protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind; 8/

(c) Desertification and drought. 9/

5. Operational activities for development: 7/

(a) Triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system; 11/

9/ Biennial consideration in odd-numbered years.

10/ Consideration in 1994 and biennially thereafter.

11/ Consideration in 1995 and triennially thereafter.

(b) Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. 9/

6. Training and research:

(a) United Nations Institute for Training and Research;

(b) United Nations University. 8/

F. Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

9. The following questions are to be considered in the plenary of the Assembly as sub-items of an item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance":

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;

(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions;

(c) Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster; 3/

(d) International cooperation to mitigate the environmental consequences on Kuwait and other countries in the region resulting from the situation between Iraq and Kuwait. 12/

10. Under that item, the following reports will be discussed:

(a) All reports currently submitted under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations";

(b) Reports of the Secretary-General on special economic and disaster relief assistance to all individual countries and regions;

(c) The report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people;

(d) Reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction;

(e) The reports of the Secretary-General on sub-items (c) and (d) listed in paragraph 9 above.

12/ This sub-item shall be considered biennially, in even-numbered years.

11. This cluster of questions shall be discussed in the plenary of the General Assembly in a consolidated debate. A debate in plenary on humanitarian and special economic and disaster relief assistance shall be held every year to consider the implementation of resolutions and the pertinent reports of the Secretary-General on individual countries and regions, including the report on assistance to the Palestinian people. Separate and appropriate arrangements, with interpretation services, should be made available in order to organize informal consultations for discussions on new initiatives or follow-up resolutions on this cluster of questions under the chairmanship of one of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly or another issue coordinator to be designated each year for the task. The negotiating mechanisms of the Second Committee may be used if necessary, as appropriate. Efforts should be made to avoid overlapping of meetings of the Second and Third Committees and the plenary meetings at which this cluster of questions is considered.